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5 June 1954

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FAR EAST

25X1A. Japanese Diet disturbances may lead to new elections:

Foreign Minister Okazaki has informed Ambassador Allison that the Socialists' premeditated resort to force in the Japanese Diet on 3 June was a great

shock to the Japanese and a serious blow to democracy.

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Comment: The riots were precipitated when the Socialists seized the speaker's rostrum in order to prevent a vote on a bill to centralize the police force.

The conservative parties have shied away from new elections, primarily because of the shipping scandals in which members of the administration were involved. Yoshida may now feel, however, that the Socialists' irresponsible behavior provides him with an opportunity to rally conservative elements and prolong his tenure through new elections at this time.

According to a press dispatch, Prime Minister Yoshida's trip to the United States and Europe has been indefinitely postponed.

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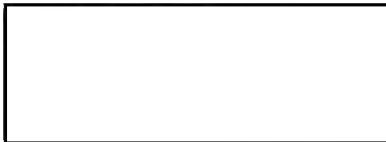
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SOUTHEAST ASIA

2. Communist journalist discusses Europeans in Viet Minh army:

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when asked [redacted] whether the Viet Minh intended to enroll Foreign

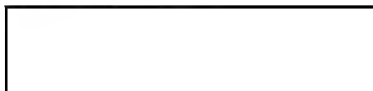
Legion personnel captured at Dien Bien Phu in a "Communist Legion," commented, "As is well known, Westerners have fought in Ho Chi Minh's army for some time." He added that these were predominantly Germans but also included some Hungarians and French, and that he had observed some in the Viet Minh army as it massed for the assault on Dien Bien Phu.

Comment: Almost from the outset of Indochina hostilities in 1946, the Viet Minh has used deserters of various nationalities from the French forces, particularly the Foreign Legion. One report of October 1951 alleged that European deserters served both in independent units and as officers attached to Viet Minh regiments.

On 25 May a French official in Saigon cited a report from a wounded officer evacuated from Dien Bien Phu that "a number of foreign Communist officers... and unidentified Europeans" had served with the Viet Minh during the Dien Bien Phu campaign.

3. Thai premier's newspaper warns West against failure to support free Asian nations:

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An editorial in the Bangkok Tribune on 2 June asserted that because of the apparent reluctance of the West to take an "all-out stand" against Communist advances, many Asian nations are already taking a "second look at their foreign policy." If these nations cannot count on help from the free world, according to the editorial, they feel that it would be "better to sign up with the Communists."

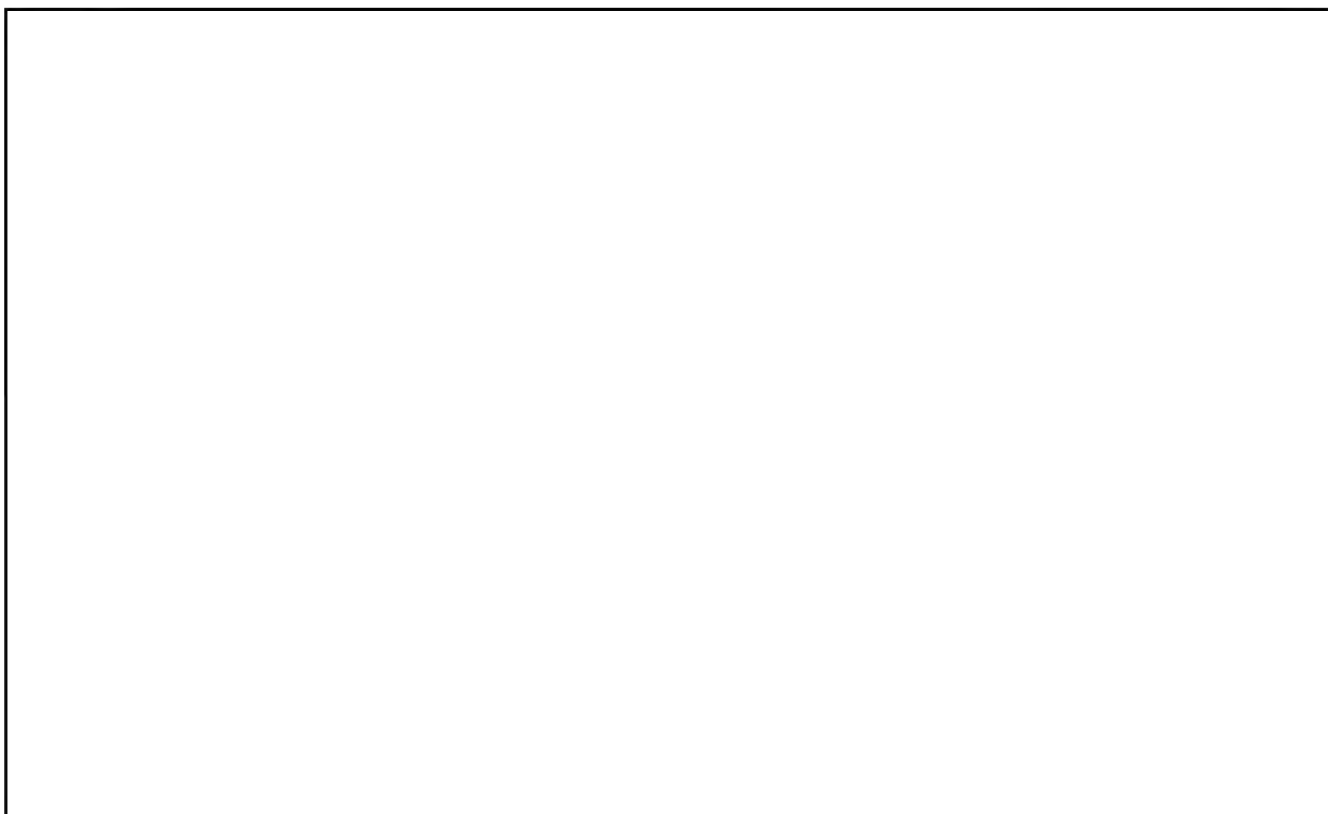
"Asian diplomatic observers" were said to agree that failure of the United Nations to respond quickly to Thailand's appeal would mean a further loss of prestige for the "United Nations and the United States in Asia."

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Comment: The Bangkok Tribune, an English-language paper, is owned by Thailand's premier. Its editorial may have been designed as another step in Thailand's long-standing efforts to win a firm American commitment to Thailand's defense.

25X1 The terms in which it is stated are much stronger, however, than any used heretofore and may indicate that Thailand is beginning to reassess its pro-Western foreign policy.



NEAR EAST - AFRICA

5. Shah tells Indian ambassador US is bulwark against Soviet aggression:

The shah of Iran told Ambassador Henderson on 31 May he had informed Indian ambassador Chand in mid-May that Iranians were "pro-American" because the United States seems

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more determined than any other great power to thwart Soviet aggressive policies.

The shah said he also told Chand that Iran, after long experience, is convinced the USSR is even more aggressively inclined than Czarist Russia; that he is convinced the United States is trying to prevent, rather than promote, another war; and that Iran cannot accommodate its foreign policies to suite Prime Minister Nehru.

Comment: If the shah accurately reported his statement, it is the strongest yet made by him to date on his position on East-West relations. By making it to Chand, who had tried a few days earlier to interest the Iranians in the possibility of a Soviet-Western agreement guaranteeing the neutrality of Iran, the shah presumably made sure that his views would reach Moscow. The fact that he discussed this subject with Henderson suggests that he will press even more energetically for American military aid.

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WESTERN EUROPE

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7. West German officials warn against relaxation of COCOM controls:



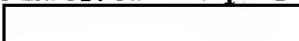
West German trade officials have advised American representatives in Paris that in their opinion the COCOM Consultative Group meeting in July should consider whether it

is politically prudent to implement COCOM's decontrol recommendations or whether in fact the control lists should be tightened. They said that in any case, because of changes in the international political situation, no items should be decontrolled before the July meeting.

The Germans suggested that London and Washington make an immediate attempt to reach an agreed assessment of the relationship of the general international situation to the current COCOM list review.

Comment: The Consultative Group is scheduled to meet in July following completion of the current COCOM review of the export control lists, to act on the decisions reached in this review.

A high French official has told American embassy representatives in Paris that his government will soon announce its opposition to any reduction in COCOM coverage for the foreseeable future--a provision which may provoke sharp controversy in COCOM.

In response to British urging, all COCOM countries, including the United States, committed themselves in April to a substantial reduction in the export control lists. 

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